

some of those hardworking taxpayers in our district on a regular basis. It gives us an opportunity to talk about the many things that those in our districts do on a regular basis. They don't ask for recognition; they just do it because it is the right thing to do.

And that's why today I stand here, Mr. Speaker. I want to congratulate Dr. Joseph Schrodtt of Decatur, Illinois, for being honored by the American Medical Association for his 50-year anniversary of graduation from medical school. While Dr. Schrodtt's dedication and commitment to the medical profession through the years is a tremendous accomplishment, I would be remiss if I didn't take this opportunity to also thank Dr. Schrodtt for all he and his family have done for the entire Decatur area.

Dr. Schrodtt's contributions to the area are too many to mention, but his advocacy and hard work on behalf of students and education is something we should all strive to emulate. Whether it was his time spent serving on the board of my alma mater, Millikin University and their board of trustees, or the Richland Community College Foundation Board, or he and his late wife Martha's work to see the health education wing at Richland Community College come to fruition, Dr. Schrodtt's impact in the Decatur area will be felt for generations.

So I take this time today, Mr. Speaker, to offer my thanks to Dr. Schrodtt and his family for all that they have done and all that they continue to do, and offer my heartfelt congratulations to Dr. Schrodtt for this tremendous accomplishment.

#### THE RYAN BUDGET AND SNAP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, budget resolutions are moral documents. They lay out a vision of how each party sees the future and where our priorities should lie. Since this is budget week, the week when we will vote on a number of different competing visions for America, it is the right time to talk about the misguided priorities laid out in the Republican budget as presented by Chairman PAUL RYAN.

Once again, Chairman RYAN has proposed a budget that guts low-income programs. The Ryan budget not only does not end hunger now, it actually makes hunger in America worse than it is today.

Simply put, we are currently not doing enough to end hunger now. There are over 50 million hungry Americans in this country; 17 million are kids. Over 47 million rely on SNAP, formerly known as food stamps, to put food on their tables. Without this program, real hunger—the actual absence of food—would be much worse.

The Great Recession is the primary reason hunger is so bad today. Now,

don't get me wrong; hunger has been getting worse since the Presidency of Ronald Reagan. We almost eradicated hunger in America in the late 1970s, but hunger has been getting steadily worse in the decades since. But the Great Recession, the worst economic period we've faced since the Great Depression, resulted in millions more hungry people, millions of people who had to turn to SNAP as the safety net that prevented them from going without food altogether.

Recognizing that hunger is a real problem and that we need to end hunger now, I would hope that any budget proposed in this Congress would, at the very least, do no harm to those who are struggling the most in our current economy. Yet the Ryan budget slashes SNAP once again. This should come as no surprise. This is basically the same budget he has introduced over the past few years—and the same budget that voters have rejected over and over again. Yes, Mr. Speaker, this is the same budget that turns Medicare into a voucher, the same budget that repeals the Affordable Care Act, and the same budget that gives even more tax breaks to the wealthiest Americans. And, Mr. Speaker, it's the same budget that turns SNAP into a block grant.

Some of my Republican friends will provide false arguments about what the Ryan budget really does. They'll say that this just gives Governors flexibility, or they're just combating fraud, waste, and abuse. Mr. Speaker, the real goal of the Ryan budget, and of some of my Republican friends who support it, is to end SNAP as we know it.

SNAP is not just a simple antihunger program; it is among the more effective and efficient, if not the most effective and efficient, Federal program. SNAP has a historically low error rate. Trafficking is going down, and prosecutions of SNAP trafficking are clearly visible as USDA works to reduce that problem. SNAP is a countercyclical program. That means that enrollment increases as the economy worsens. It is a true safety net program, and it has a side benefit of being a stimulus program. Every SNAP dollar spent results in another \$1.72 in economic activity.

Yes, SNAP can use some improving, but the wholesale and shortsighted changes included in the Ryan budget are not the answer. The Ryan budget actually cuts \$135 billion from SNAP over the next 10 years—\$135 billion. That's not a haircut; that's a meat-ax. It's an 18 percent cut, a cut that will cause real harm to low-income families who otherwise could not afford food.

The cuts in the Ryan budget will have a real impact on poor Americans and struggling working families because millions of people on SNAP work for a living. They earn so little that they still qualify for Federal assistance. If they apply these cuts solely to eligibility, these cuts would mean that 8 to 9 million people would be cut from SNAP. If these cuts are applied solely

to benefits, then all 47 million people on SNAP would see an average cut of \$24 per person per month. That adds up to a cut of almost \$1,100 per year for a family of four. That may not seem like much to a Congress that has a ton of millionaires, but a \$1,100 cut will do real, serious harm to people whose budgets are already stretched to the limit.

Cuts like these are not just misguided, they're cruel. Combined with cuts to other low-income programs that are included in the Ryan budget, these SNAP cuts will absolutely make hunger in America worse. As we consider a budget, at the very least, we should do no harm, but we really should be striving to make every American's life better. That's our job. Cutting SNAP not only doesn't make anybody's life better, it actually does real harm, harm that will manifest in a less educated population, a sicker Nation, and a Nation that ultimately has to spend more on the hungry simply because we decided to bring austerity to a program that doesn't deserve to be cut.

We are a great country, Mr. Speaker. We are great because we have a tradition of caring about the most vulnerable among us. Let us not turn our backs on one of our greatest traditions. This assault on poor people must come to an end. This assault on the hungry, many of whom are kids and senior citizens, must come to an end.

Mr. Speaker, I believe we can end hunger now if we find the political will to do so. The Ryan budget does the opposite. It cuts a vital antihunger program for crass political reasons, an act that makes hunger worse. Let us instead pass a budget that lifts people up, not one that keeps people down.

#### DECISION TIME IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, this is decision time in America. We are at a fork in the road, and we have an opportunity to go in either one of two directions. In one direction, the Democratic approach, we can take a balanced approach to dealing with the economic situation that we find ourselves in and our deficit. The other direction, the GOP approach, is to balance the budget on the backs of the most vulnerable amongst us. The Democratic plan will put Americans back to work. The Republican plan will put Americans out of work. It's decision time in America. We can go in one of two different directions.

Now, a balanced approach to deficit reduction has at least four elements to it:

First, invest in the American economy.

Second, increase revenues by closing corporate loopholes that are unfair, unreasonable, and unnecessary.